



Twelfth Thousand.

IPSE DIXIT

OR THE

GLADSTONIAN SETTLEMENT

OF

I R E L A N D.

BY

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SECOND EDITION.

DUBLIN:

HODGES, FIGGIS, AND CO., GRAFTON-STREET.

LONDON:

P. S. KING AND SON,

PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY,

CANADA BUILDINGS, KING-STREET, WESTMINSTER.

1886.

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DUBLIN:
PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS,
BY PONSONBY AND WELDRICK.

BOETIUS
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IPSE DIXIT.

THE Irish question has occupied much of the attention of Mr. Gladstone during his political career, and the right honourable gentleman would doubtless point to his Irish legislation as constituting his peculiar glory as a statesman. He has disendowed the Church of Ireland. He has practically transferred the fee-simple and inheritance of Ireland to the 'Irish People'. He is now engaged in the still greater question—that of the Legislative Union between the countries; and in his *Manifesto*, just issued, he proclaims his purpose to devote the available residue of his active life to its consideration. It cannot be said that hitherto the Irish legislation of Mr. Gladstone has proved a remarkable success; and on this question of the Union his influence is impaired, and his authority is open to be challenged, by one of those remarkable changes of front which have thrown an interesting, not to say a fantastic air, around the Protean politics of his career. In the year 1871, when addressing the sober Scotch, on the subject of the Repeal of the Legislative Union, he asked: 'Can any sensible man, can any rational man, suppose that, at this time of day, in this condition of the

world, we are going to disintegrate the capital institutions of this country, for the purpose of making ourselves ridiculous in the sight of all mankind, and crippling any power we possess for bestowing benefits through legislation on the country to which we belong?’ For fourteen years his sentiments would appear to have remained unchanged. In the year 1885, he addressed the Scottish constituencies, and entreated them by everything they held dear to send him into the Imperial Parliament with a Liberal majority, which would enable him to cope with the foul conspiracy which, he said, existed between the Tories and the Parnellites to disintegrate the Empire. In the year 1886—*mirabile dictu*—all is changed. No transformation scene in a Christmas Pantomime could be more sudden or complete. The right honourable gentleman’s assumption of infallibility is as calm, his eloquence is as self-confident, his interrogatories are as rhetorical as ever. According to his wont, his *Manifesto* declares that ‘his trust is in the wise and generous justice of the nation’. To accomplish what? The very thing which he had previously declared to be neither just, nor generous, nor wise.

The Bill of Mr. Gladstone has descended like a thunderbolt upon an astonished people. The whole country is up in arms upon the question. It is not alone the Conservatives, or the Tories, or the Tory-Democrats that are alarmed. There is confusion in the camp of King Agramant. The great Liberal Party, like the veil of the temple, is rent

in twain. The Radicals are roused. Mr. Bright is silent; Mr. Chamberlain has seceded; Mr. Jesse Collings is in open rebellion. Mr. Gladstone in his *Manifesto* acknowledges and laments the fact. As far as men worthy of the name of statesmen are concerned, he virtually stands alone. Indeed the only noticeable man in England that supports the Prime Minister in his new departure is the great noble, who but yesterday was the representative of an Imperial Crown, and to-day, like the Roman Emperor, is holding the stirrups of his conqueror as he mounts his horse.

The Irish question is as paradoxical and yet as momentous now as it was 300 years ago, when Lord Spencer's ancestor wrote his View of the State of Ireland, in the form of a dialogue between Irenaeus and Eudoxus. 'If that country of Ireland, whence you lately came, be of so goodly and commodious a soil as you report', says Eudoxus, 'I wonder that no course is taken for the turning thereof to good uses, and reducing that nation to better government and civility'. 'Marry', quoth Irenaeus, 'so there have been divers good plots devised, and wise counsels cast, about reformation of that realm, but they say it is the fatal destiny of that land, that no purposes whatsoever, which are meant for her good, will prosper or take good effect, which, whether it proceed from the very genius of the soil, or influence of the stars, or that Almighty God hath not yet appointed the time of her reformation, or that he reserveth her in this unquiet state still for

some secret scourge, which shall by her come unto England, it is hard to be known, but yet much to be feared'.*

And as even wise men, contemplating the desperate condition of the country, used the language of desperation then, so wise men are found using the language of desperation now. Men wished in Spenser's time 'that all that land were a sea-pool'. Men in our own time have peevishly exclaimed that the only remedy for the mischiefs and the miseries of Ireland was to submerge it for four-and-twenty hours beneath the sea. Even wise and honest men like Thomas Carlyle and John Bright have spoken of unmooring the island from its foundations in the deep, and letting it drift three thousand miles westward towards the great Republic of the West. In fact there is scarce a man in England at the present moment who, if he dared to give public expression to his thoughts, would not express a devout desire that Ireland should be permitted to go her own way, so that England might be rid of her for ever.

But this is not to be. The fatal island lies moored within twenty miles of Scotland, within sixty miles of England, and in instantaneous communication by electric union with its neighbours. Even supposing the two countries were connected by an unnatural bond, like the Siamese twins, they might plague each other, and be for ever in each

* *Tracts and Treatises on Ireland*, vol. i. p. 417.

other's way, but they would have joint pulsations and a joint life, and the severance of the bond would be the signal of the death of each. At present the islands are united by no such unnatural tie, for they are one. They are mutually incorporated in one United Kingdom. The Unity of that Kingdom, everyone tells us, is still to be maintained. But it is now proposed that there should be two Legislatures in the place of one, and that the Kingdom, like the Legislature, should henceforth be virtually divided into two.

This is the last of the good plots devised, and the wise counsels cast, by Mr. Gladstone. Its great recommendation in his opinion is that it would be *final*. 'What I wish', he said in the House of Commons, 'is that we should no longer fence and skirmish with this question, but that we should come to close quarters with it; that we should get if we can at the root; that we should take measures not merely intended for the wants of to-day and of to-morrow, but, if possible, that we should look into a more distant future'. 'In order to be a good plan', he said, 'it must be a plan promising to be a *real* settlement of Ireland'. 'There have been several plans liberally devised', he said, 'for granting to Ireland the management of her education, the management of her public works, and the management of one subject and another—things very important in themselves—under a central elective body'; but he does not think that 'such a scheme would

have possessed the advantage of *finality*'. In his last *Manifesto* the Prime Minister recurs to the idea, and proposes, 'to treat the Irish question' with 'thoroughness of method', and 'to settle, on an adequate scale, and once for all, the long-vexed and troublesome relations between Great Britain and Ireland'.

Let us examine the Bill, then, with reference to this paramount advantage of finality; and in order to do this let us briefly analyse the provisions of the Bill, and collect its *disjecta membra* from the forty-one sections over which they have been deliberately scattered. The first section of the Bill proposes to enact that 'on and after the appointed day there shall be established in Ireland a Legislature, consisting of Her Majesty the Queen and an Irish Legislative Body' (sec. 1). The seventh section proposes that 'the Executive Government of Ireland shall continue vested in Her Majesty, and shall be carried on by the Lord Lieutenant on behalf of Her Majesty, with the aid of such officers and such Council as to Her Majesty may from time to time seem fit' (s. 7, subs. 1). It is next provided that 'subject to any instructions which may from time to time be given by Her Majesty, the Lord Lieutenant shall give or withhold the assent of Her Majesty to bills passed by the Irish Legislative Body, and shall exercise the prerogatives of Her Majesty in respect of the summoning, proroguing, and dissolving of the Irish Legislative Body, and any prerogatives the exercise of which

may be delegated to him by Her Majesty' (subs. 2). And, finally, it is provided that 'the Legislature of Ireland shall not pass any Act relating to the office or functions of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland' (s. 26, subs. 4); that his salary shall be charged, not on the Consolidated Fund of Ireland, but on that of the United Kingdom, and that the expenses of his household and establishment shall be defrayed out of moneys to be provided by the Parliament of Great Britain (subs. 2); and that, 'notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in any Act of Parliament, every subject of Her Majesty shall be eligible to hold and enjoy the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland without reference to his religious belief' (subs. 1). In spite of the denunciations of *United Ireland*, the Castle will remain, though the Constitution may perhaps receive a shock. For the Imperial Crown is limited by the Act of Settlement to the Princess Sophia 'and the heirs of her body being Protestant'; but the English Viceroy who is to be invested with the prerogatives of the Crown in Ireland may be—a new Tyrconnell.

So much for the first branch of the new Legislature—the Lord Lieutenant. Let us briefly sketch the constitution of the second branch of the new Legislature—the *Irish Legislative Body*. The Irish Legislative Body is to consist of a first and second order (s. 9, subs. 1). The first order is to consist of two parts—28 peers, who are to sit for life or a term of 30 years, whichever lasts the longer, and 75 elective members, who are to be possessed of a pro-

perty qualification of £200 a year, derived from realized property, and are to be elected by occupiers of lands or tenements of the annual value of £25 or upwards, and are to have a ten years' term of office (s. 10). The second order is to consist of 204 members, to be chosen by the existing constituencies under the existing franchise, subject to any alteration in the constitution or election of the order, excepting as to its number, which may hereafter be made (s. 11)—'due regard being had in the distribution of members to the population of the constituencies' (s. 11, subs. 7). This composite body is to be summoned, prorogued, and dissolved by the Lord Lieutenant, subject to any instructions which he may receive from England (s. 7, subs. 2), with this limitation, that 'the offices of members of the first order shall not be vacated by the dissolution of the Legislative Body' (s. 10, subs. 8, clause 9). The two orders are to deliberate together and to vote together—like the Nobles, the Clergy, and the *Tiers Etat* in the last States General of France, where we know what happened. It is true that for the purposes of a suspensive veto (s. 23) the Legislative Body is to be regarded not as one Legislative Body, but as two separate Legislative Bodies (s. 9, subs. 2); and this, doubtless, will conduce to concord. An invidious prerogative is also to be revived, for a right of veto is to be vested in the Lord Lieutenant, acting on the instructions of Her Majesty the Queen (s. 7, subs. 2); and here again we have Revolutionary France

to guide us, for Marie Antoinette, if I recollect aright, was nicknamed Madam Veto. The Legislative Body 'may have continuance for five years, and no longer' (s. 6); and in every fifth year 37 or 38 of the elective members of the first order are to retire from office, the remainder returning to the next parliament without re-election (s. 10, subs. 6).

Such is the constitution of the new Legislative Body. In order to see how the new system will operate, let us next inquire into its *powers*. This is essential in order that we may see how far the proposed settlement will be final—how far it will meet the aspirations of the Irish people—how far, in the words of Mr. Gladstone, it will meet 'the desire and the demand of Ireland'. This desire and this demand are now notorious. Mr. Parnell has proclaimed from a hundred platforms that the minimum he will accept is Grattan's Parliament. What, then, were the powers which Grattan claimed, and eventually extorted, from the fears of England? Everyone is familiar with his speech on the Irish Declaration of Rights; and it is thus he spoke of the free Constitution which he claimed for Ireland. 'Suffer me to state some of the things essential to that free Constitution. They are as follows:—the independency of the Irish Parliament; the exclusion of the British Parliament from any authority in this realm; the restoration of the Irish Judicature; and the exclusion of that of Great Britain'. 'As to the Perpetual Mutiny Bill', he said, 'it must be more than limited—it must be effaced; that Bill must

fall, or the Constitution cannot stand'. 'What!' he said, 'a Bill making the Army independent of Parliament, and perpetual! I protested against it then; I have struggled with it since; and I am now come to destroy this great enemy of my country'. 'As to the legislative powers of the Privy Councils', he continued, 'I conceive them to be utterly inadmissible against the Constitution, against the privileges of Parliament, and against the dignity of the Realm'. Mr. Grattan then produced an inventory of Bills, altered and injured, as he said, by the interference of the Privy Councils, and proceeded:—'I will never consent to have men, God knows whom, Ecclesiastics, &c., &c., men unknown to the constitution of Parliament, and only known to the Minister, who has breathed into their nostrils an unconstitutional existence, steal to their dark divan to do mischief, and make nonsense of bills which their Lordships, the House of Lords, or we, the House of Commons, have thought good and fit for the people. No—those men have no legislative qualifications; they shall have no legislative power'. What, then, were Mr. Grattan's terms—terms which were eventually conceded—terms which Mr. Parnell has said to his constituents are the minimum of what he will accept? *First.* The repeal of the perpetual Mutiny Bill, and the dependency of the Irish army on the Irish Parliament. *Second.* The abolition of the legislative power of the Council. *Third.* The abrogation of the claim of England to make law for

Ireland. *Fourth.* The exclusion of the English House of Peers, and of the English King's Bench, from any judicial authority in this realm. *Fifth.* The restoration of the Irish Peers to their final judicature—the independency of the Irish Parliament in its sole and exclusive legislature. These are my terms', he said; 'I will take nothing from the Crown'.*

Now let us compare these terms with the final settlement of Mr. Gladstone, and it will give us a curious insight into the true nature of its finality. Not one single point of Mr. Grattan's ultimatum is to be granted! Not one single minim of Mr. Parnell's minimum is to be conceded! One and all the terms of Mr. Grattan have been ingeniously ignored by Mr. Gladstone! Thirteen momentous exceptions (sect. 3), and seven portentous restrictions (sect. 4), are Mr. Gladstone's answer to the demand for 'the independency of the Irish Parliament in its sole and exclusive legislation'. 'The dependency of the Irish army on the Irish Parliament' is out of the question; for Ireland is to be garrisoned by English troops (sect. 3, subs. 3). 'The abolition of the legislative power of the Council' is so far from being conceded, that the Irish Legislature will not be allowed to touch the rights or privileges of the meanest existing corporation 'without the leave of Her Majesty in Council' (sect. 4, subs. 5); the Irish

* Grattan's *Speeches*, vol. i., pp. 127-129.

Legislature will not be permitted to appropriate any part of the Irish revenue in relation to any prohibited subject without 'the assent of Her Majesty in Council' (sect. 19, subs. 2); the Irish Legislature will not have power to alter the salaries of even the future judges of the Exchequer Division without the like consent (sect. 20, subs. 2). Mr. Grattan demands 'the restoration of the Irish Judicature, and the exclusion of that of Great Britain'; Mr. Gladstone answers that the decision of all questions arising as to the powers conferred on the Legislature of Ireland by the Act are to be referred to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England (s. 25, subs. *d*). Mr. Grattan demands 'the exclusion of the English House of Peers from any judicial authority in this realm'; Mr. Gladstone answers that 'save as in this Act provided with respect to matters to be decided by Her Majesty in Council'—the *English* Privy Council—'nothing in this Act shall affect the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords in respect of actions and suits in Ireland' (sect. 36). Not only on high constitutional questions, such as the status of the Crown; not only in matters of international relation, such as war and peace; but on all matters relating to navigation and trade (sect. 3, subs. 9); on all matters relating to currency and coinage (subs. 12); on all matters relating to the exclusive rights of Irishmen to the use or profits of their own inventions (subs. 13), the interference of the Irish Legislative Body is precluded. In fine, Mr.

Grattan demands 'the abrogation of the claim of England to make law for Ireland'; and Mr. Gladstone provides that 'save as herein expressly provided, all matters in relation to which it is not competent for the Irish Legislative Body to make or repeal laws, shall remain and be within the exclusive authority of the Imperial Parliament, save as aforesaid, whose power and authority in relation thereto shall in nowise be diminished or restrained by anything herein contained' (sect. 37).

When such paramount authority is claimed for the Imperial Parliament, it becomes interesting to inquire what the *Imperial Parliament* of the future is to be. At present it is an Imperial Parliament in which Ireland is represented as an integral portion of the Empire, and by the laws of which she is legitimately bound. But the 24th section of the Bill proposes to enact that 'on and after the appointed day Ireland shall cease, except in the event hereafter in this Act mentioned'—an event which may be left out of the question, as the present settlement is to be considered final—'to return representative peers to the House of Lords, or members to the House of Commons; and the persons who on the said day are such representative peers and members shall cease as such to be members of the House of Lords and House of Commons respectively' (sec. 24). The Imperial Parliament of the future then is to be a Parliament in which no Irishman, as an Irishman, or as a representative of Irishmen, can sit. It will not be

an Imperial Parliament—it will be a *British* Parliament—it will be the Parliament of England and Scotland. Accordingly, it will be the Parliament of England and Scotland which will determine whether Ireland is to be at peace or war; it will be the Parliament of England and Scotland that will impose the Irish customs and excise; it will be the Parliament of England and Scotland which will regulate the navigation and the trade of Ireland.

A variety of theories have been laid down as to the relation which subsists between Ireland and the sister Island. King John, by his Letters Patent, boldly ordained that Ireland should be governed by the laws of England in right of the *dominion by conquest*.^{*} Macaulay conceived that England had the right even to destroy the woollen manufacture of Ireland on the broad general principle that Ireland was a *colony* planted by her sons.[†] Blackstone lays it down as unquestioned law, that apart from Poyning's Acts, Ireland was bound by all English Statutes, in which it was expressly named, or impliedly included, 'for', he says, 'this follows from the very nature and constitution of a *dependent State*, dependence being very little else but an obligation to conform to the will or law of that superior person or State upon which the inferior depends'.[‡] Such, too, was the doctrine of the Irish Judges.[§] It was against

^{*} 1 Black. *Com.*, 100.

[†] 1 Black. *Com.*, 103.

[‡] *History of England*, iv. 231. [§] Grattan's *Speeches*, i. 42.

this position of inferiority and dependence that the Irish House of Commons protested in the year 1641.* It was this 'dependence and subordination of Ireland to the Imperial Crown' of Great Britain that the English House of Commons entreated King William to enforce, when it condemned the tract of Molyneux to be burnt by the English common hangman.† It was this subordination and dependence which was declared to be the law of the land by the declaratory statute, 6 Geo. I. c. 5, which legislatively declared that 'the kingdom of Ireland ought to be subordinate to, and dependent upon, the Imperial Crown of Great Britain, as being inseparably united thereto; and that the King's Majesty, with the consent of the Lords and Commons of Great Britain in Parliament, has power to make laws to bind the people of Ireland.' That statute, it is true, was repealed by the British Parliament when Ireland stood on the verge of civil war demanding its repeal. But this is the very law, couched in the very language of the statute, which the Prime Minister proposes now to re-enact. Mr. Gladstone tells us that 'the exclusive right of the Parliament of Ireland to make laws for the people of Ireland never was denied till the reign of George II.' All history belies the statement. At all events the Prime Minister proposes that this demand of the Parliament of Ireland should be *now* denied. He is proposing to acquire immortal

* M'Gee's *History of Ireland*, vol. i., p. 97.

† Mitchel's *History of Ireland*, vol. i., p. 29.

honour by re-enacting what Yelverton and Grattan acquired immortal honour by repealing. He is proposing to enact as law that which Molyneux, the friend of Locke, denounced as usurpation. He is proposing to establish the theory of a depending kingdom against which Swift, the friend of Bolingbroke, protested as contrary to the law of God, of nature, and of nations.* He is proposing to re-enact the statute which Grattan described as a general attack on the liberties of Ireland.† The flame kindled by the burning of the tract of Molyneux, to use the words of Grattan, illumined posterity; but it has shed no ray of light on the mind of Mr. Gladstone. No—the Bill of the Prime Minister has not even the merit of originality. It is a mere plagiarism from the past. It is an experiment which has already failed. The Revolution which he would fain inaugurate is not so much a Revolution as a mere Reaction.

The Bill contains the elements of a reaction more insufferable still. Since the Americans threw the English tea-chests into the sea at Boston, Dr. Johnson's 'Taxation no Tyranny' has not expressed the sentiments of any English party. But if the idea died with Lord North, it has come to life again with Mr. Gladstone. Ireland is to have no representative in the British Parliament, and the British Parliament is to be empowered to fleece it and to flay it with customs and excise. According

* See the fourth of the *Drapier's Letters*.

† Grattan's *Speeches*, i., 42.

to the nationalist historian, the National Debt of Ireland was £4,000,000 just before the Rebellion, and it was raised to £26,841,219 in carrying out the Union, in the interest of England;* and now after 85 years of a union, which Mr. Gladstone denounces as flagitious, it is fixed by Mr. Gladstone at £48,000,000, the interest of which Ireland is to pay, and England is to collect. Ireland is to be allowed a mere pittance, for pocket-money, out of a total revenue of £8,350,000, and all the rest is to be allocated and appropriated by England. Ireland is told that England is a foreign nation, and that henceforth the laws of Ireland are not to come in a foreign garb, and that her government is not to wear a foreign aspect. But she is to pay a foreign tribute; and the army of the foreigner is to occupy her territory in order to collect it; and she is to pay for this foreign occupation for all future time. It is thus that the Prime Minister, to use the words of his *Manifesto*, proposes to secure to Ireland 'immunity from gross and wholesale insult', and to restore her share of 'the great inheritance of human right'.

But, says Mr. Gladstone, we shall have 'the consent of the three countries'. 'We have no right to question for a moment in this free country, under a representative system, that the vast majority of the

* Mitchel's *History*, vol. ii., p. 153. Lord Clare's figures differ from those of Mr. Mitchel; but in declaiming upon this topic the Irish Patriots of the future, I fancy, will prefer the figures of Mr. Mitchel to the figures of Lord Clare.

Irish representatives speak the mind of a decided majority of the people of Ireland'. He seems to think that he is engaged in a great international transaction, in which Mr. Parnell is to be regarded as a plenipotentiary, with full powers to bind the people of Ireland. This is a strange view of the constitution for a constitutional minister to adopt. 'Parliament', said Mr. Burke to his constituents at Bristol, 'is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain as an agent against other agents and advocates; but Parliament is a deliberative assembly of our nation, with one interest—that of the whole—where not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member, indeed; but when you have chosen him he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of Parliament'.* This doctrine is as old as Coke.† In fact it is coeval with Parliament itself. But grant that the doctrine is obsolete—grant that it is a part of the fallen ruins of a crumbling constitution—is it so very certain that the vast majority of the Irish representatives speak the minds of a decided majority of the Irish people? The present Irish Parliamentary Party are the mere puppets of Mr. Parnell, just as the present ministers are mere puppets in the hands of Mr. Gladstone. Whose

* Burke's *Works*, iii. 20.

† 4 Inst. 14.

mind is it, then, that Mr. Parnell speaks? In the first place Mr. Parnell does not speak the mind of the million and a-half of men who represent the wealth, the intellect, the independence, and the sober judgment of the Irish people. In the second place, he does not speak the mind of any Nationalist who took him at his word, and sent him into Parliament to win back the Parliament of Grattan. And, in the last place, he does not represent the most consistent and self-sacrificing of the 'patriots' of Ireland.

The Prime Minister, in the rush and riot of his headlong course, seems strangely to have forgotten who it was that originally roused him from his political slumbers, who it was that suggested his Irish policy, who it was that brought his great measures of disendowment, of confiscation, of dismemberment, within the sphere of his beneficent activity. Let that lamented gentleman, the late A. M. Sullivan, remind the Prime Minister of the fact that the Irish Nationalist Party is composed of two divergent sections. 'Through all the course of Irish politics, from 1848 downwards', says Mr. Sullivan, 'the divergence and conflict of these two sections of the National party may be traced, and have to be kept in mind. Half the blunders of English politicians'—let the Prime Minister take note of this—'in dealing with the passing incidents of domestic Irish affairs, arise from ignorance of this state of things. A correct appreciation of it supplies a key to many appa-

rently perplexing problems. The Constitutional Nationalists, looking to Henry Grattan as their founder, and the Revolutionary Nationalists, or Separatists, taking Wolfe Tone as theirs, have operated, and still operate—sometimes together, often in conflict—in Irish politics, down to the present day’.* Down to the present day this is as true as when *New Ireland* was written. Well, then, let the Prime Minister reflect upon a fact which he seems to have forgotten in his calculation. At the present moment there are 300,000 organized *Fenians* in Ireland. They have their affiliated clubs in every village. They have their military bands in every town. They are partially drilled and partially armed, and would be completely drilled and would be completely armed, were it not for those laws with a foreign aspect which still perpetuate ‘Coercion’. These men are backed by the whole body of the Irish, who carry on their operations in the United States; and they are bound by the most deadly oaths never to rest till they have established a *republic* one and indivisible in Ireland. ‘We stand face to face with Irish Nationality’, said the Prime Minister, amid the cheers of the Home Rule party. But the Irish Nationality which he faces is not the Irish Nationality which he will have to face. Mr. Parnell and his party are in evidence at present. But though Mr. Parnell marches at the head of the

* *New Ireland*, Seventh Edition, p. 197.

Irish movement he does not lead it. He is urged onwards from behind. He and his followers are merely pushed forward as a cloud of skirmishers to mask the real advance. The advancing party are the Fenians. I have no sympathy with the aspirations of these men, but I think I understand them, and if I cannot approve their aims I can appreciate their motives. They are not the mere camp followers of a cause. They are not the mere stipendiaries of sedition. They are men with an idea. They are men. No member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood has condescended to send round the hat. They have supplied the martyrs and not the mendicants of disaffection. What will men of this type say when they come to understand the final settlement which has been arrived at between a party of puppets and a ministry of marionettes? On and after the appointed day there shall be established in Ireland a Legislature consisting of an Irish Legislative Body—and Her Majesty the Queen! On and after the appointed day the Legislature of Ireland shall be subordinate to, and dependent on, the Parliament of England! On and after the appointed day the English Parliament shall impose, and English officials shall administer, and English officers shall levy, Irish taxes! On and after the appointed day Ireland shall pay tribute to a foreign nation—England! On and after the appointed day Ireland shall be occupied by foreign troops, and shall pay for the foreign occupation. I can imagine

what men such as these will say when they come to understand a final settlement like this. ‘A continued Monarchy’—they will exclaim—‘A subsidized Lieutenant! A Legislative Body bound hand and foot by England! A Tributary Province! A Province in the occupation of a foreign army! Ireland reduced to the level of Roumelia, the tributary to the Turk!’ ‘Is it for this’, they will say, ‘that we have dared all, and suffered all, and waited? Is it for this that our brethren have crowded the English prisons, and have perished on the English scaffold? And *this* is to be the final settlement—this is to be received as a final settlement by *us!*’

Under Grattan’s constitution the political situation, according to the patriotic historian, was anomalous and insecure. ‘Ireland had not, like England, a responsible body of Cabinet Ministers, accountable to her own Parliament. The Lord Lieutenant and Irish Secretary ruled as before; and although they were appointed, it was said, by the King of Ireland, they really held their offices and received their instructions from the Ministers in England’.* Mr. Gladstone’s constitution makes no provision for the remedy of this evil; but it will doubtless be remedied by the Irish Legislative Body. An Irish Administration will be formed. There will be no Minister of War, for Ireland will possess no army. There will be no Minister of Marine, for Ireland will not possess so much as

* Mitchel’s *History*, vol. i., p. 275.

a single gardacosta to protect its coasts. There will not even be a Minister of Commerce, for trade and navigation are beyond the competence of an Irish Legislature. Neither will there be a Minister of the Fine Arts; for Ireland will be poor, and Art, which depends upon the rich, will be an absentee. But there will doubtless be a Minister of Finance, a Minister of Agriculture, a Minister of Public Instruction, and a Minister of Justice and Police. What the Minister of Agriculture will recommend is doubtful. He will, I am sure, consider the policy of migration as distinct from emigration, the expediency of converting the pasture lands of Ireland into tillage, and the pecuniary advantage of cultivating the Irish wastes, when the Irish cultivated lands have ceased to pay. The Minister of Public Instruction is precluded, it is true, from meddling with such subjects as the endowment of religion, or the establishment of any system of denominational education; but, 'with the assent of Her Majesty in Council', he will have the power to appropriate any part of the Irish Public Revenue 'for the purpose of, or in connexion with, such subjects' (sect. 19, subs. 2); and he will doubtless exercise his powers—when he has any revenue to appropriate. The Minister of Justice will secure to Ireland the inestimable benefits of a learned and independent Bench, and an accomplished and intrepid Bar. The Minister of Police will see that the police are well armed and drilled—and will probably utilise the Fenians. The whole

administration, however, will mainly depend upon the Minister of Finance. ‘For the purpose of providing for the Public Service of Ireland, the Irish Legislature may impose taxes other than duties of customs and excise as defined by the Act’ (sect. 12); and I am sure the Minister of Finance will do his best to make provision for the Public Service. But what is the Minister to do? He will have to manipulate the finances of a country denuded of capital, and destitute of credit, and he will commence his operations with an empty exchequer, and an overwhelming debt. He will not possess the power of issuing assignats, and territorial mandates, and *bons des trois quarts*, which the French Minister of Finance in the French Revolutionary period possessed; for England will not permit him to deal with currency or coinage. Nay, his own salary, and that of his colleagues, and that of the whole public service, may be in arrears, and England will not even permit him to exercise an independent judgment as to the taxes which he will impose; for the Bill provides that ‘it shall not be lawful for the Irish Legislative Body to adopt or pass any vote, resolution, address, or bill, for the raising or appropriation for any purpose of any part of the public revenue of Ireland, or of any tax, duty, or impost, except in pursuance of a *recommandation* from Her Majesty signified through the Lord Lieutenant, in the session in which such vote, resolution, address, or bill is proposed’ (s. 19, subs. 1).

It may seem astonishing that the Irish Parliamentary Party should consent to receive a Bill like this, with its exceptions, and its restrictions, and its illusive powers, as a *final settlement* of all questions depending between Ireland and England. And yet we have been assured by the Parnellites, in open Parliament, that the Bill will be accepted in full discharge of all demands by the whole Irish Parliamentary Party—‘to a man’. But the Irishman is no fool: the Parnellites know what they are at. They know that the separation of the Legislatures is the first step to the separation of the countries. The Irish Legislative Body, created by the Prime Minister of England, is at least a body; and they will know how to animate it with a soul. They may promise and protest; but their promises and protestations are not treason to Ireland—they are merely perfidy to England.

The Prime Minister believes that his new Irish government will never come into collision with the Government of England. He intimates in his *Manifesto* that under his new Constitution the preservation of Imperial prerogative is absolute and complete. He has obviated, as he thinks, the possibility of such a conflict as occurred on the occasion of the Commercial Propositions of Mr. Pitt in 1785, by reserving to the English Parliament all questions affecting Commerce. He has obviated, as he thinks, the possibility of such a conflict as occurred on the Regency question in 1789, by reserving to the English Parliament all questions re-

lating to the status of the Crown. But in spite of these precautions, a thousand occasions of quarrel will arise between the Irish government and the Imperial government of England. Suppose the Irish Legislative Body should declare its sittings permanent when the Lord Lieutenant had intimated his intention to prorogue it or dissolve it (s. 7). Suppose the Irish Legislative Body should refuse to impose such taxes, duties, or imposts, as will raise a sufficient revenue to meet all sums charged for the time being on the Irish Consolidated Fund (s. 13). Suppose the Irish Legislative Body should refuse to pay the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom the instalments which it is bound to pay on foot of loans advanced on any security in Ireland (s. 17). Suppose the Irish Legislative Body, on a declaration of war by England, should peremptorily refuse to appropriate any further sums out of the Consolidated Fund of Ireland 'in aid of the army or navy, or other measures [*sic*] which Her Majesty may take for the prosecution of the war' (s. 18). How are these obligations to be enforced by England?

But the Bill is exposed to objections far more serious than these. The Irish Legislative Body may not only refuse to assist the English Government in its wars; it may have occasioned the very war in which it refuses to assist. The Legislature of Ireland is forbidden to make laws relating to offences against the *Law of Nations* (s. 3); the power of making such laws is expressly re-

served to England; and it is England that will be responsible to foreign powers for their enforcement. Suppose, then, that Dublin should become, as under the new regime it is likely enough to become, the Alsatia of the Communards, the Dynamitards, the Nihilists, the Invincibles, of Europe; suppose that Ireland should grant the right of sanctuary to the persecuted patriotism of the world. A foreign monarch is assassinated; the assassin flies to Ireland; the foreign government demands his extradition from the government of England; the English Government calls upon the Irish Executive to act—what if the Irish Executive declines to act? what if it assumes an attitude of passive resistance to the demands of England?

Take the case of the *Army*. Here we have the actual experience of the past to fall back upon for our instruction. In the year 1780 the Irish army, or rather the English army in Ireland, was provided for under the Annual Mutiny Act, passed by the Parliament of Great Britain—the arrangement that is now proposed by Mr. Gladstone. The public mind was agitated against England at the time, and popular passions were aroused. The Army was falling to pieces by desertion; the deserters were committed to prison; and the Irish magistrates released them. Members of the Irish Parliament declared in their places that neither as magistrates nor as jurors would they suffer the British Mutiny Law to be acted on. In his extremity the English

Viceroy summoned his Irish Privy Council, and his Irish Privy Council informed the English Viceroy that the British Mutiny Act could not be enforced in Ireland.* This history may well repeat itself; and at the first acute crisis of affairs the English army in Ireland will be demoralised by invitations to desert, and by the impunity offered to desertion. Or look at the matter in another view. England, we are told, is considered by Ireland as a foreign country. If so, the English garrison in Dublin will be in the same position as an Austrian garrison at Milan, or a Russian garrison at Warsaw. The Irishman will be in the same position as the Italian or the Pole, and will be animated by the same patriotic instinct. Here, again, we have history to instruct us. The Irish populace under the Constitution of Mr. Gladstone will probably be neither better nor worse than the Irish populace under the Constitution of Mr. Grattan; and in the year 1783, just a hundred years ago, so many men of the 49th Regiment had been *hamstrung* by the Irish patriots, that the regiment was ordered out of Dublin, lest they should inflict retribution on the mob who were in league to protect the ruffians who assailed them.

The Legislature of Ireland is forbidden to make 'laws' with reference to *Volunteers*. But the tradition of the Volunteers is one of the most cherished of Irish ideas; and who is to coerce the Irish Volunteers

* Froude's *English in Ireland*, vol. ii., pp. 278-282.

if they take to volunteering? Who is to interfere with the liberty of the subject if the subject takes to marching in procession under a tricolor of green, and white and orange, surmounted by a pike-head, such as Mr. Meagher brought back from Paris and presented to the citizens of Dublin? * What if the armed beggary of Ireland, to use a phrase of Mr. Grattan's, should rise? The English commander-in-chief might mount his cannon on the entablatures of the Bank, and bivouac his troops in the quadrangles of the College, as his predecessor did in 1848. But I fear there would be nothing left for it but this.

A similar difficulty would arise with respect to the *Customs* and *Excise*. Irish patriotism may possibly come to regard the English Custom-house officer, and the English exciseman, as Irish patriotism has regarded the tithe proctor, the process-server, and the bailiff. In such a case I fail to see how, under Mr. Gladstone's Constitution, the English Government will be able to protect its own officials from the natural hatred of the Irish people; and I scarcely think the Irish Administration will make itself unpopular by putting forth its powers to arrest the natural course of Irish indignation. The Bill, it is true, provides that 'all legal proceedings instituted in Ireland by or against the Commissioners or any Officers of Customs or Excise' may be brought before the Irish Exchequer Division, and carried to the English House of Lords; and that if it is made to appear that any decree or

* Mitchel's *History*, ii. 436.

judgment in any such proceeding has not been duly enforced, the Judges may 'appoint some officer to enforce it' (sec. 20). But if the Irish Administration should wink hard, or look the other way, as Irish officials in the Castle even now occasionally do, I wonder what benefit would accrue from this to the exciseman?

Then, again, as to Irish *Trade and Commerce*. If Mr. Gladstone conceives that he has effectually secured the trade of Manchester, and Birmingham, and Sheffield, from the avowedly protective policy of the Irish Party, I should recommend him to read Swift's proposal for 'utterly rejecting and renouncing everything wearable that comes from England'. Swift was not an old parliamentary hand, but he knew something of Ireland and the Irish, and he is worth listening to upon an Irish question. 'I heard', he says, 'the late Archbishop of Tuam mention a pleasant observation of somebody's—that Ireland would never be happy until a law were made for burning everything that came from England—except their people and their coals'. No such *law*, thanks to the Prime Minister's precautions, can be made by the Irish Legislative Body. 'But', says the Dean, 'what if the House of Commons should think fit to make a resolution—*nemine contradicente*—against wearing any cloth or stuff in their families which were not of the growth and manufacture of this kingdom?' 'What if they should extend it so far as utterly to exclude all silks, velvets, calicoes, and the whole lexicon of female fopperies, and declare that whoever acted other-

wise was an enemy to the nation ?' As a matter of fact, in the year 1780 the Freeman of Dublin met, with the High Sheriff in the chair, and carried a non-importation resolution, in which they declared that 'they would neither themselves import, nor consume, nor would deal with any tradesman who ventured to import, manufactured goods from England'.* Mr. Gladstone proposes to create a Legislative Body which could pass such a resolution—a resolution which it could not convert into a law, but which it might invest with the moral feeling of the nation, and allow to be enforced by the peculiar sanctions by which the nation's unwritten law has from time immemorial been enforced.

The Prime Minister does not seem to see that, in handing over to the Irish Party the powers of the executive which he is willing to renounce, he is virtually handing over the powers of legislation which he is anxious to retain. On this point the letters and speeches of Mr. Grattan are full of suggestive matter, on which future Mr. Grattans will not fail to act, in case the English Government should delay to comply with their demands. 'We retire within ourselves', says Mr. Grattan to one of his correspondents, 'preserving our allegiance to the Crown as annexed to England, and in perfect obedience to all the laws of Ireland; *but we do not execute English laws nor English judgments.* We keep to our covenants and our associations, consume our own manufactures, keep on terms of amity with England under the law, with that diffidence which

* Froude's *History*, ii. 291.

must exist if she is so infatuated in support of a claim to take away our liberty'.* And it should be noted that the 'claim to take away our liberty', of which Mr. Grattan here complains, is the claim to enforce the Act which declared Ireland to be dependent on, and subordinate to, Great Britain—the very Act which Mr. Gladstone proposes virtually to re-enact. Mr. Grattan suggested how even the fetters on legislation might be burst. In struggling against the position of dependence in which Ireland was placed, he more than once spoke of possible resolutions of the Irish House as '*parliamentary ordinances to be maintained by the armed associations*'; and so impressed was the English Government of the time with the threat, that it consented to the repeal of the obnoxious law, in terror lest the Irish House of Commons should be 'overawed by popular violence to pass votes disclaiming British legislation'.†

This mention of popular violence suggests another consideration to the reflecting mind. The Prime Minister is solicitous to protect the Judges who 'have been placed in relations more or less uneasy with popular influences, and with what, under the new constitution, will in all probability be the dominating influence in that country'. But the Judges who, in the opinion of the Prime Minister require protection, are the Judges who tried the mutilators of cattle, the murderers who spared neither age nor sex, the Invincibles, who passed sentence of death on every official of the English Government in Ireland. Such is the influence

* Grattan's *Life*, ii. 251.

† Froude's *History*, ii. 344.

which the Prime Minister believes will be the dominating influence in the country—and he proposes to confer upon the country in which this is the dominating influence the boon of an independent administration. Such an administration would scarce be independent. Even in Grattan's time there was an influence which overawed Parliament itself. The Parisian mob, when it sang *ça-ira*, and danced the carmagnole, was not more audacious than the mob of Dublin. The mob hustled the Viceroy in the theatre. It hooted the obnoxious member of Parliament as he left his house. It beat its drums and sounded its rappels. It held riotous possession of the streets. It blockaded College-green, and terrorised the House of Commons. If the military were called out the Lord Mayor would not allow the soldiers to fire—for fear of hurting the poor people; and if the soldiers were attacked and used their arms in self-defence, why, they were British savages who were bent on slaughtering the Irish.

But though the new Executive of Mr. Gladstone will be impotent for good, it will be omnipotent for evil. The Civil Service, the Constabulary, and the Police will eventually be under its control. It will have the nomination of the Magistrates and of the Judges of the land. The whole patronage of the country will be in its hands. It will establish a new and an odious ascendancy. The very professions, in which at present men of loyal sentiments hold so prominent a position by force of merit, will be virtually closed to them by

reason of their one demerit—that they were loyal to the Empire and to England. The new tribunals of the country will be open to all, just as they are open now. But under the new criminal jurisprudence there will be no power of changing a venue, of appealing to a special jury, of invoking the protection of any summary jurisdiction in the case of flagrant and intolerable wrong. The Loyalists will not be expelled from Ireland as the Moors were expelled from Spain, and the Huguenots from France—they will be hustled out.

The possibility of these things is foreseen by the Prime Minister, who has exhausted his ingenuity in providing ‘restrictions’, and ‘exceptions’, and ‘safeguards’, and ‘guarantees’. But the lion is not to be kept back by the gossamers that glitter in the sun before his lair. The danger of the Loyalists is not imaginary—the fears of the minority are not fantastic. They have alarmed even the most sober of our statesmen. They have appealed to the consciences of men like Lord Hartington, and Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. Goschen. They have evoked the indignant protests of men like the Duke of Argyle, the Earl of Selbourne, and the Earl of Derby. I say nothing of Lord Salisbury and the party which he leads. There is no one who does not recognize the peril to which the Loyalists are exposed. For England to abandon them to the mercy of their foes is not mere impolicy, is not mere injustice—it is dishonour. It is dishonour such as no great nation has incurred since the Romans evacuated Britain,

and left the Britons to the mercy of the Picts and Scots.

The minority thus to be abandoned and disowned, however, is not altogether to be left out of calculation and despised. There has been talk of civil war; and the Prime Minister has characterized this talk as mere 'momentary ebullition'. The Prime Minister may be right in this, or he may be wrong. Still, in the wild excitement and fierce passions which he has roused, the possibility of a civil war in Ireland is not one of those possibilities which a wise statesman should discount. The people in the North are terribly in earnest. They are haunted with the memories of the frightful winter of 1641, and the tyranny of Tyrconnell. They still celebrate the glories of Derry, and Newtown Butler, and the Boyne. They, too, have their sentiment, their passion. What if civil war should actually break out? What does the English Government propose to do? Will it employ the Enniskilleners to dragoon Enniskillen? Will it employ the Scotch Presbyterian regiments to coerce Belfast?

But there is another aspect of the subject which England should prepare herself to face. The intellect and wish and will of a people with English blood in its veins, and which has supplied England with great soldiers, and administrators, and statesmen, will not tamely brook injustice. It is possible that it may address the English people in the tone of menace. It may say, 'We are weary of your liberal disendowments, of

your generous confiscations, of your ignominious surrenders, sanctimoniously disguised by appeals to everlasting justice. We have been so infamously treated by your English factions that we cannot be more infamously treated by our own. We will try the experiment. We will join our fellow-countrymen. Their knowledge of what desperate men may do will prevent them from driving us to desperation. We will assist in forming a United Ireland'. I do not think this action of the Loyalists would betoken good to England. *They* would not acquiesce in Ireland being held by England as a dependent kingdom, as a taxed colony, as a tributary province, as a country to remain for ever in the military occupation of a foreign power. The deadliest enemies that England encountered in America were the exiled Presbyterians of the North; and if ever she should be engaged in another struggle for existence, I do not think she could count on much enthusiasm on the part of the abandoned Loyalists of Ireland. There is the wild justice, as Bacon calls it, of revenge. There is the desperate saying of the Florentine with reference to the friends who had neglected and betrayed him. 'You shall read', he said, 'that we are commanded to forgive our enemies; but you never read that we are commanded to forgive our friends'.*

These possibilities of the future, however, are no concern of Mr. Gladstone's. His sun is setting.

* Bacon's *Essays*, No. 4.

He has lived his span. The bond which he has given to Mr. Parnell is a *post-obit*. Its obligation will have to be discharged by his successors. Its observance will have to be enforced by them. The less-reflecting Radicals repeat the cuckoo cry—there is no alternative to the scheme of the Prime Minister except coercion. But they do not reflect that it is only by coercion that the terms of Mr. Gladstone's international transaction with Mr. Parnell can ever be enforced. Mr. Parnell has no power to bind the Fenian Brotherhood. He has no power to bind the Irish in the United States. He has no power to bind posterity. What if posterity should disown its plenipotentiary, and repudiate the new Kilmainham Treaty? What if Ireland should endeavour to throw off the intolerable burden of her indebtedness to England? What if she should strive to break the galling fetters of the exceptions and restrictions imposed upon her freedom by the Act of Mr. Gladstone? What if she should refuse to recognize the fact that she is subordinate to, and dependent on, the Parliament of England? As surely as the sun fulfils its orbit, so surely will the old cycle of Irish agitation be renewed, so surely will the Irish people return upon its traces, and assume its old attitude to England. It will assume it, when England is distracted by some domestic trouble, or entangled in some diplomatic dispute, or engaged in some great European war. It will assume it, when it thinks that it has England on the hip. The only remedy that would be left to England, unless she were content

to suffer fresh wrong and humiliation at the hands of Ireland, would be coercion. But in such a case coercion would not be the coercion which it is the fashion of the moment to decry. Coercion would not be Authority enforcing *law*—it would be *War*.

The Bill of the Prime Minister is too narrow for finality, it is too wide for freedom. So far as it professes to be a concession to national sentiment, it only enables one portion of the nation to oppress the other. So far as it professes to be a final settlement between England and Ireland, it leaves open every question which has agitated Irish nationality for ages. It deprives Ireland of all the benefit of the Union, but it leaves the bond. It throws Ireland back into that state of dependency upon the Parliament of England against which the Irish House of Commons unanimously protested in 1641; against which Molyneux wrote in 1698; against which Swift declaimed in 1724; against which Grattan and Yelverton thundered in 1780, and which was disposed of, as it seemed, for ever by the Act of Renunciation, passed in 1783. The benefit of that Renunciation Act Mr. Gladstone now calls on Ireland to renounce; and Mr. Parnell consents that the English Parliament should resume the gift extorted from her fears by Grattan. This is the Gladstonian settlement of Ireland. Ireland is no longer to enjoy the benefits of the Constitution conferred upon her by the Act of Union; she is not even relegated to her rights under the Constitution of 1782; she is sent back two centuries in her miserable career,

and is to occupy the position of a dependent kingdom, which she occupied under the Constitution forced upon her by the Battle of the Boyne.

Mr. Gladstone conceives that his measure would restore Ireland to her share of 'the great inheritance of human right.' How would this measure have been regarded by Mr. Grattan? We know his views, not as to the great inheritance of human right—for Mr. Grattan was no cosmopolitan politician, no Tom Paine in office—but as to the rights of Irishmen as British subjects. He stated them in his speech to the House of Commons in moving the Declaration of Right in 1782. Having described the triumphs achieved by the spirit of liberty in England, he indignantly asked: 'Has then the birth-right of the British subject, *your* birth-right, been sufficient against precedent? . . . has our common birth-right done all this for England, and given security to her meanest subject, and clothed her beggar with his sturdiness? and has it left Ireland naked, subject to be bound without your consent, taxed without your consent, with your commerce restricted, an independent army, and a dependent Parliament, and your property adjudged by the decisions of another country?'

* To this indignant question of the great Irish Patriot Mr. Gladstone proposes to answer, Yes. This is the very position to which he would fain reduce the country. And does the Prime Minister think that Irishmen are so destitute of manhood and so lost to shame that they will finally acquiesce in an ignomi-

* Grattan's *Speeches*, i. III.

nious settlement like this? It is impossible they should. The agitation which distracted Ireland from 1641 to 1782 will be renewed. There will be a new race of agitators.

Alter erit tum Tiphys, et altera quae vehat Argo
Delectos heroas.

There will arise a new Darcy, a new Molyneux, a new Swift, a new Lucas, a new Grattan, to protest against subordination, and to contend for independence. They will say, ‘Mr. Parnell stood in a Parliament where Ireland was at a disadvantage; he accepted an ignominious compromise from the English Minister; but Mr. Parnell was not the Plenipotentiary of Posterity, and he had no authority to bind the Irish Nation.’ In contemplating the settlement of 1886—if it is fated that the year 1886 is to be our year of ill omen—they will be animated with the sentiments of Mr. Grattan when he said, ‘If I had lived when the 9th of William took away the woollen manufacture, or when the 6th of George the First declared this country to be dependent, and subject to laws to be enacted by the Parliament of England, I should have made a covenant with my own conscience to seize the first moment of rescuing my country from the ignominy of such Acts of power; or, if I had a son, I should have administered to him an oath that he would consider himself as a person separate and set apart for the discharge of so important a duty.’

No—the measure, if passed, would be no final settlement of the difficulties in which we are involved.

It would not inaugurate an era of fraternity and friendship—it would be but the beginning of strife; it would be the letting out of waters. And it is not merely that fresh complications would arise in Ireland. Our whole Colonial system would be shaken to its base. The prestige of our Empire would be gone. And it is for results like these that we are called upon to cripple our resources, disturb the equilibrium of our finance, and add £100,000,000 to our debt. It is for results like these that we are called on to violate every principle of the great Liberal Party—to re-introduce the inequalities which it has striven to remove; the vetoes which it has derided; the property qualifications which it has denounced as fraught with perjury and fraud; the theory of taxation, against which Chatham and Burke and Fox protested, and which cost us an empire when we endeavoured to enforce it. The fatal measure is repudiated by all those who, to use the phrase of Burke adopted by Lord Beaconsfield, are men of light and leading. The whole intellect of the country is against it. Against the intellect of the country the Prime Minister invokes its ignorance, under the name of ‘the upright sense of the nation’—its faction, under the name of ‘an upright and enlightened House of Commons’—its fanaticism, under the desecrated name of ‘generous justice’—its evil genius, under the form of the malignant Irish vote—its madness, under the guise of its blind reliance on himself.

Let not the English people disguise from themselves the true character of the abject surrender which they are called upon to make. If they are determined to perpetrate this folly, let them look it in the face. Let them recognize the fact that they are relying, not on their own judgment, but on the infallibility of a single man. And what are Mr. Gladstone's claims to their confidence at this momentous crisis? In 1835 Mr. Gladstone denounced the policy of the Whigs with reference to the Church of Ireland, and expressed his belief that 'if it should be removed they would not long be able to resist the Repeal of the Union'.* In 1871 Mr. Gladstone asked his countrymen 'Can any sensible man, can any rational man, suppose that at this time of day, in this condition of the world, we are going to disintegrate the capital institutions of the country, for the purpose of making ourselves ridiculous in the sight of all mankind, and crippling any power we possess of bestowing benefits through legislation on the country to which we belong?' In 1885 he entreated his countrymen to give him such a Liberal majority as might enable him to defeat the nefarious conspiracy which he said existed between the Parnellites and Tories. And in the year 1886—a few short months afterwards—he brings in his Government of Ireland Bill, and proposes that we should cripple our powers, disintegrate our empire, and make ourselves ridicu-

* Hansard, Series 3, vol. xxvii. p. 513.

lous in the eyes of all mankind. He does this on the transparent pretext that the Tories had ventured to try the experiment in 1885 which he himself had tried in 1880. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, without a word of warning, he changes the professions of his life. Without consulting the country, without consulting his party, without consulting the colleagues with whom he was accustomed to act, without taking counsel with anyone; industriously concealing his intentions, he has broken with all the traditions of his party and his past.

The eyes of the whole world are fixed upon the English people. Both friend and foe are watching how it will comport itself in this crisis of its fate. Its enemies—those who envy its glory, and detest its name—are holding meetings, delivering orations, and passing resolutions, applauding Mr. Gladstone's 'generous' resolve. But in reality they are watching with malignant eyes to see if they can observe any signs of weakness in the attitude of England; to see if they have any chance of flattering a great people into infamy and ruin. And what of the Democracy of England? The great American Democracy entered on the most gigantic war in the annals of the world to preserve its Unity. The great French Democracy sent the most brilliant of its statesmen to the guillotine because they proposed to split up the great French Republic into a confederacy of small republics. Is the Democracy of England inferior in patriotism to that

of America and to that of France? Has it lost all imperial instincts, foresworn all imperial traditions, forgotten all the responsibilities of empire? Mr. Chamberlain has answered for the English people—No! And I think I know how the people of Scotland will respond to the cry of their brethren in Ireland. They will respond in the words of the great Scottish Historian and Liberal Statesman, which were received with thunders of applause in the Imperial House of Commons forty years ago:—‘The Repeal of the Union we regard as fatal to the Empire, and we never will consent to it; never, though the country should be surrounded by dangers as great as those which threatened her when her American Colonies, and France, and Spain, and Holland were leagued against her, and when the Armed Neutrality of the Baltic disputed her maritime rights; never, though another Bonaparte should pitch his camp in sight of Dover Castle; never, till all has been staked and lost; never, till the four quarters of the world have been convulsed by the last struggle of the great English people for their place among the nations’.



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